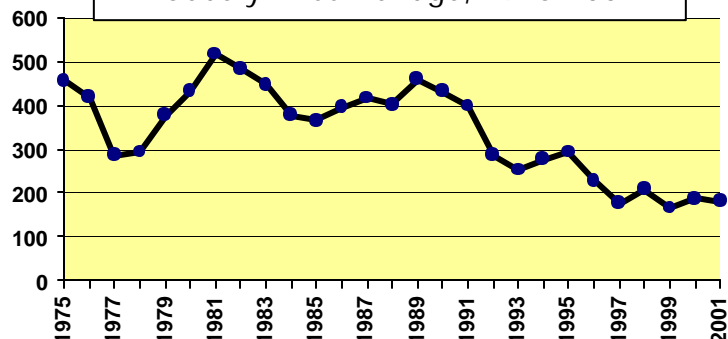


Robbery

186 in 2000 · 181 in 2001 · 3% Decrease

Robbery in Cambridge, 1976-2001



Robbery is theft in which the offender confronts the victim and steals the victim's property through force or threat of force. It includes "muggings" and "hold-ups," though the offender does not need to display a weapon (and about half of them do not) for the crime to be categorized as a robbery.

	2000	2001	Change
Commercial Robbery	23	34	+48%
Street Robbery	163	147	-10%
Total	186	181	-2%

Robbery is usually committed on the street, in the dark, by an offender or offenders who the victim does not know. The confrontational, threatening nature of the crime has a strong influence on the behavior of the public. Robbery is one of the crimes most often considered by a citizen when he or she gauges the general "safety" of an area.

Robberies are divided into robberies of *institutions* (e.g., banks, convenience stores) and robberies of *individuals*. These are colloquially known as *commercial robbery* and *street robbery*. Commercial Robbery makes up less than 15 percent of the robbery total in Cambridge. Unlike assault, robbery statistics are fairly sound; robbery victims are very likely to report the crime.

Since the mid-1960s, which is when this city began measuring crime, 1999's robbery total was the lowest reported in Cambridge. Commercial robbery, which plunged from an average of 100 a year in the 1980s to 18 in 1999, was probably at the lowest point since the days of stagecoach hold-ups.

2001 was following on this long-standing downward trend, dropping an overall 3% from 2000's statistics. Surprisingly, the year closed out at a 48% increase in commercial robberies, partly due to the spree of bank robberies Cambridge experienced this past year.

Robbery is the taking or attempted taking of anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear. This crime includes muggings, purse snatchings, and bank hold-ups.

Commercial Robbery

Commercial Robbery describes the taking or attempted taking of anything of value from the care or custody of a commercial or financial establishment. Examples of this crime include the bank heist, the cab stick-up, and the convenience store hold-up.

Commercial Robberies by Location Type

Type	1998	1999	2000	2001
Bank/Armored Car	2	6	4	10
Bar/Restaurant	3	2	1	3
Cab	2	2	3	1
Convenience/Gas	6	4	8	8
Drug Store	1	0	1	1
Fast Food	0	0	0	2
Hotel/Motel	0	0	2	1
Liquor Store	0	0	1	1
Misc. Retail	5	4	7	5
Parking Garage	0	0	1	2
Total	19	18	23	34

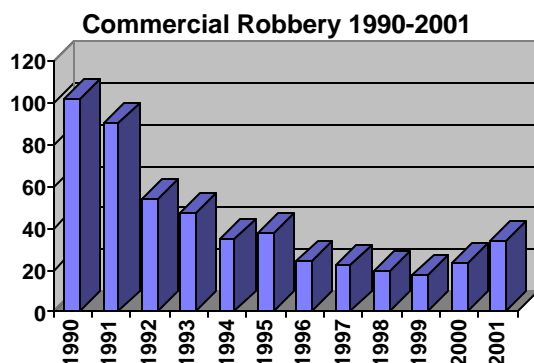
From 1970 to 1990, Cambridge averaged 100 commercial robberies annually, but starting in 1990, it began to swiftly plummet, totaling only 18 in 1999, an all time low and 23 in 2000. In 2001, this trend changed and experienced a 48% increase. Contributing factors in the spree of robberies this year include the trend of OxyContin robberies as well as the spree of bank robberies that mainly occurred in Porter Square. A yearly total of 34 commercial robberies for a city the size of Cambridge are quite low, considering the fact that an average city of our size has around 50 per year.

Cambridge statistics do reflect a national decline in commercial robbery since the 1980s. A number of factors account for this trend, including increased security measures at gas stations (plexi-glass booths), convenience stores (drop safes, silent alarms), and banks (dye packs, better surveillance cameras, "man traps"); the Cambridge Police Department's Park & Walk program, which increases

police visibility in vulnerable areas; and the disappearance of the particular breed of criminal who commits commercial hold-ups.

Cambridge experienced an increase in commercial robberies this past year in comparison to last year. In 2000, there were 23 incidents of various commercial locations and increased to a notable 34 instances in 2001. There were five convenience store robberies, four bank robberies, three robberies of gas stations, three taxicab robberies, two Hotels, and one robbery each of a drug store, liquor store, parking garage, auto rental shop, café, and a video rental shop.

Due to the recent spree of bank robberies, Cambridge has experienced an increase in the number of incidents this past year. In 2000, there were a total of 23 commercial robberies, 4 of which were from banks, compared to 2001's 34 incidents, 10 of which occurred at neighborhood banks. The last three months of this year hosted 6 robberies, 1 of which resulted in an arrest during the month of November. In this incident, the perpetrator passed a note demanding a package of 20-dollar bills at a local Fleet Bank and fled with the cash. The perpetrator was later apprehended and arrested in Somerville. In general, the Porter Square area hosted the most bank robberies, accounting for 3 of the 10 incidents this year, including the arrest that was made in November.



Robbers targeted a total of six gas stations this past year, three of which occurred in Cambridgeport. The Magazine Beach Shell gas station on Magazine St. was victim to two attempted robberies. In both instances, more than one suspect approached the self-service window, demanding cash. The employee(s) at the time stated there was no money, causing the suspects to become angry and violent. During one incident, the suspects motioned as if they had a gun, although none were seen. During the other instance, the suspects hit the window with a baseball bat. In both instances, the suspects fled in motor vehicles, while nearby witnesses obtained the suspects' respective license plate numbers.

Peabody and the Highlands each reported one robbery of a fast food establishment on Concord Avenue. In early February, the Burger King on

Concord Avenue reported a white male entering the premises while wearing a dark mask on face, stating "It's cold outside". The suspect, possibly a prior employee, then produced a small black handgun and said "give me all your money" to the employee behind the register. The suspect successfully fled with \$550. The second incident occurred at the Dunkin Donuts on Concord Avenue when a white male went to the rear door of the store, asking for donuts. When the employee returned with the items, the suspect did not pay the employee, but rather lifted his T-shirt to unveil a firearm tucked in his waist. The suspect was later apprehended and arrested, and it was learned that the firearm was an imitation and unable to fire a round.

OxyContin

Popular features of OxyContin are said to appeal to recreational users due to the fact that it is considered safer than street drugs since it is lab-produced, and its time-release properties mean more OxyCodone — up to 160 milligrams — can be packed into each pill. The surge in OxyContin robberies seems to reflect the high price that the drug demands on the street and its powerfully addictive high. The street value is \$1 a milligram, and the pills come in dosages of 10, 20, 40, 80 and 160 milligrams - the average pill on the street is \$40.

The Boston Globe has reported that approximately 40 OxyContin robberies were solved since early spring of 2001, leading Boston-area police to believe the robberies were the work of organized bandits. Immediately following this idea, a recent surge of midday robberies evolved, which were committed by a new kind of OxyContin robber: the dealer-junkie. Since first-time addicts soon develop higher tolerances, requiring larger dosages for the same high. In many cases, habits like these can cost more than \$1,000 a week. Since many addicts cannot afford such an expensive high, many have gone back to heroin, which is much cheaper at \$4 a bag, and is easier to get on the street. In the end, there is so much money to make with OxyContin, that stealing and selling the drug has become irresistible to dealers and addicts who can get their hands on it.

The New York Times has reported that there had been a series of 14 robberies of pharmacies in Boston and its suburbs during the summer of June and July alone, contributing to a surge of robberies of drugstores throughout the U.S. During these incidents, the robbers had ignored cash registers and other drugs and taken only OxyContin. It had also been said that the same group of young white males were committing these thefts due to similarity in 85% of the thefts in Massachusetts.

Contributing to popular trend, Cambridge experienced one drugstore theft. In this instance, the

suspect entered the CVS Pharmacy on Massachusetts Avenue in West Cambridge and approached the pharmacist at the counter and whispered, "give me some OxyContin and nobody will get hurt." The employee then took the suspect to a rear room safe where he gave the suspect three bottles of Endocet and two bottles of OxyContin. Although the suspect mentioned a gun, no weapon was shown.

Geographic Breakdown of Commercial Robberies

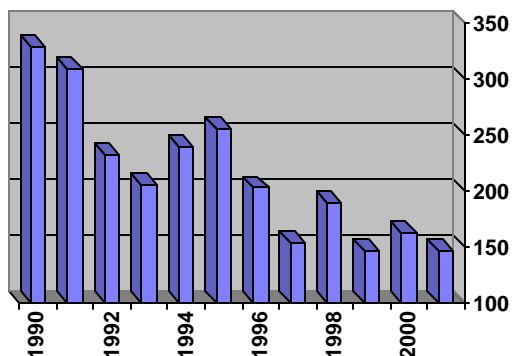
AREA	1999	2000	2001
East Cambridge/Galleria	0	5	4
Kendall Square/M.I.T.	0	1	5
Inman Square/Harrington	2	3	4
Central Square	5	4	2
Cambridgeport/Riverside	1	2	3
Bay Square	0	1	0
Harvard Square	2	2	6
Mass. Ave. 1500-1900	4	0	3
Porter Square/North Camb.	3	2	3
Alewife/West Cambridge	1	3	4

Street Robbery

"Street robbery" describes all robberies committed against individuals, as opposed to commercial establishments. Despite the name, a "street" robbery does not necessarily have to occur on the street, although more than 75% of them do. Examples of street robberies are "muggings," "carjackings," and "purse snatchings."

After years of steady decline, street robbery bottomed out this year with the lowest ever reported total of 147 incidents, along with 1999's 147 incidents. Since 1996, this crime type has teetered between approximately 150 reports and 200 reports averaging out at 171 incidents a year for the past five years.

Street Robbery 1990-2000



A long-term trend analysis of street robbery reveals 12 recurring scenarios:

Acquaintance Robberies: Related to the Domestic Robbery and the Homeless Robbery (see below). Acquaintance robberies are committed by someone the victim knows. Common scenarios include

drinking buddies robbing each other after a night at the bar, friends turning on each other, drug disputes, and robberies between co-workers.

Bikejackings: In this scenario, any number of attackers will approach a young (10–15 years old) male victim on a bicycle and through force of numbers, knives, or other weapons, will demand the victim's bike. Often, the attacker simply shoves the victim off of his bicycle and takes it. In a good portion of bikejackings, the victim knows his attacker. In the year 2001, only one bikejacking was reported, where the victim gave chase to the youth suspect. Nearby suspects threatened the victim and told him to let them keep the bike.

Bully Boys: Juvenile robberies of intimidation. In most occurrences, the victim knows the perpetrators. Committed by and against school-aged youths, they occur on the way home from school, or at playgrounds, malls, parks, and skating rinks. Two to four juvenile males usually strong-arm their victim, stealing such things as his jacket, hat, or lunch money.

Carjackings: In this scenario, a lone predator will approach a victim entering or exiting his or her car, or when stopped at a traffic light. In no uncertain terms, the robber will order the victim out of the vehicle and demand the keys.

Dial-a-Victim: These are robberies of delivery service personnel. A delivery person is intercepted before entering a phony location by suspects brandishing a knife or gun. Arrests made in 1993 had a major impact in curtailing this crime.

Street Robberies by Categorization

Categorization	1999	2000	2001
Acquaintance	10	5	9
Bikejackings	3	3	1
Bully Boys	22	15	5
Carjacking	1	4	2
Dial-a-Victim	3	0	0
Domestic	2	0	2
Home Invasion	1	3	3
Homeless	8	4	8
Pack Robbery	19	30	21
Predatory (Crude)	53	59	39
Predatory (Pro.)	13	18	31
Purse Snatching	12	22	17

Domestic Robberies: The domestic robbery is a relatively new scenario, which has emerged over the past several years. In these incidents, the perpetrator is usually an ex-boyfriend, who uses force in street confrontations to take back jewelry or cash. Family robberies are also on the rise: husbands robbing their wives, brothers robbing their sisters,

and estranged children robbing their parents or grandparents. Many of these robberies involve past debts.

Home Invasions: One of the most serious robbery types, home invasions involves robbers entering their victim's homes, usually at night, subduing the residents (sometimes by tying them), and robbing the home. Fortunately, this type of robbery is rare in Cambridge, and when it occurs, the victim usually knows the robber or robbers.

Homeless Robberies: The homeless robbery is a sad scenario reflecting urban life in the 1990s: homeless people robbing each other. The majority of these robberies occur in the vicinity of Central and Harvard Squares, or at various shelters. The victim usually knows the perpetrator, and in many cases, both are intoxicated. Property stolen ranges from a bottle of wine to a blanket to a pair of shoes. Homeless robberies are sometimes precipitated by past debts, real or imaginary.

Pack Robberies: In this situation, a group of three to eight young males will stalk victims around shopping malls, MBTA stations, streets, parks, and recreational areas. The majority of these robberies occur on Friday or Saturday nights, when the "pack" is returning from a dance or party. The robberies are not always premeditated, but the victim—typically a male between the ages of 15 and 25, walking alone—simply ends up on the wrong place at the wrong time. Weapons are seldom used, but strong-arm tactics are applied. Usually, the victim is knocked to the ground or ordered to lie down while the robbers shake him down for his wallet, watch, or other valuables. There were six arrests this year for this type of crime, including an arrest of two male youths for attempting to rob him of his bag and wallet.

Predatory Robberies: This type of street robbery has the most pronounced effect on a citizen's perception of safety. Predatory robberies are synonymous with "muggings." In the typical scenario, one or two men approach the victim with a knife or gun and demand cash. The danger of serious injury is ever present. In recent years, predatory robbers have become cruder and less controlled, pushing and kicking their victims. Cambridge typically experiences more two-person predatory robberies than any other type.

Because of the frequency of this type of robbery, the crime analysis unit further subdivides predatory robberies into "crude" and "professional" robberies. "Crude" means that the robbers were edgy, unprepared, and unpredictable. In "professional" predatory robberies, the robbers are collected, efficient, and effective.

Purse Snatch: The purse snatcher is generally unarmed, and has little intent to cause injury. After

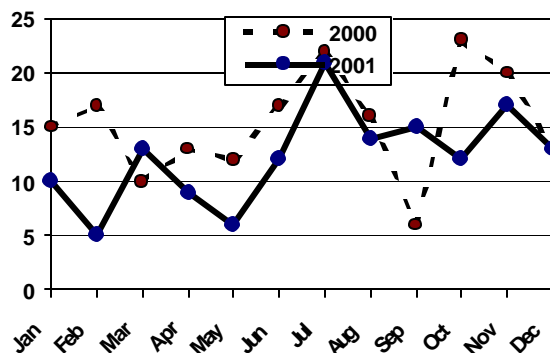
"casing" a victim—a female carrying a purse, bag, or wallet—this robber runs up from behind—on foot or on a bicycle—and snatches the item out of the victim's hands or off her shoulder before she can react, often effecting a "body check" in the process.

Geography

Neighborhoods reporting the highest street robbery totals in 2001 were Cambridgeport, Area 4, Mid-Cambridge, and East Cambridge. Area 4 and Cambridgeport, together make up most of "Central Square," which traditionally reports the highest robbery totals. Central Square has long been a robbery hot spot for several reasons, including its high pedestrian traffic, its proximity to bars, its MBTA subway stop, its comparatively high "street" population, and its reputation as a drug trafficking area.

Traditionally, Mid-Cambridge and Riverside neighborhoods are hit harder than other areas due to the amount of traffic going through Central Sq. and Harvard Sq. Surprisingly, Mid-Cambridge remained the same at 18 incidents, while Riverside decreased by 50% from 21 to 11 incidents this year.

Cambridge Highlands, Strawberry Hill, and MIT remain the least likely neighborhoods to report a street robbery. The former two can credit their relative lack of nightlife, while MIT benefits from patrol from two police departments: the Cambridge Police and the M.I.T. Campus Police. Even though M.I.T. does not see much activity, their numbers doubled from four to two incidents this year. Attributing this increase were two reports of a male suspect exiting his vehicle and going up to persons walking along the street and demanding their wallets and knife point. The Highlands was the only neighborhood to not report a street robbery this year, while Strawberry Hill followed the trend and reported only one robbery.



Seasonal Variations

As the graph on the previous page suggests, street robbery isn't subject to predictable seasonal patterns. Except for the months of July and August, all numbers in 2001 were quite opposite of 2000. Reports were heavy in the later portion of the fall of 2000 as well as the winter, and low in 2001. Reports were low in the late summer/early fall 2000 yet high in 2001. Trends were almost always on opposite tracts showing little to no seasonal similarities.

The only seasonal similarity was during the spring season where during both 2000 and 2001, the street robberies were increasing, partly due to the nice weather, which gave way to more people on the streets. Although the numbers were higher in 2000, the overall trend was followed in 2001 during this time. In the month of July, there were 21 incidents in 2000, when in 2001 there were also 21 incidents – an exact match.

Times of Day and Day of Week

Temporal analysis of street robberies is more revealing: approximately one third occur between

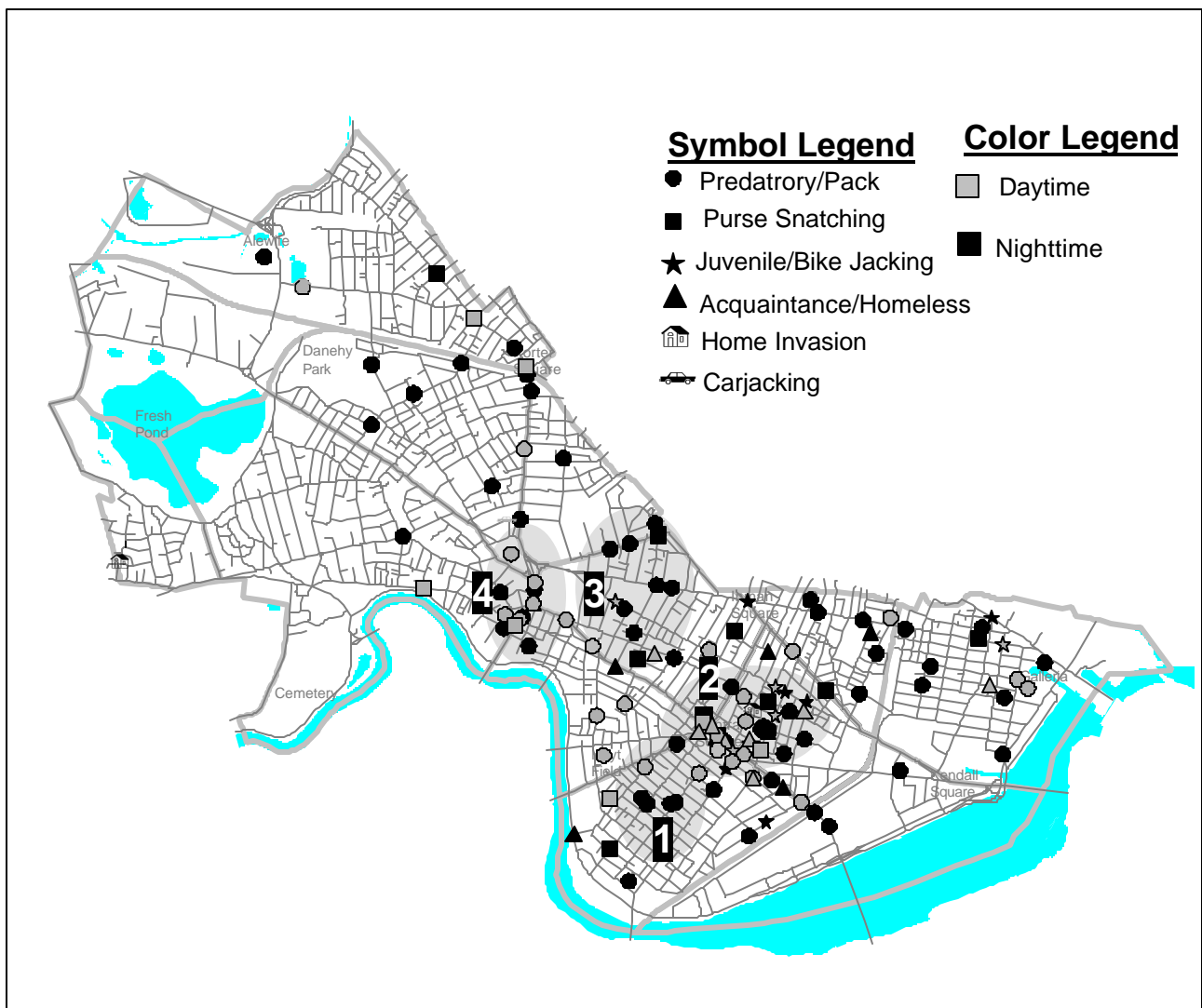
midnight and 4:00 a.m., another third between 4:00 a.m. and noon, with the remaining incidents occurring between noon and midnight, revealing no particular 'hot times'. Predatory robberies (or "muggings") are most active between 9:00 p.m. and 3:00 a.m., while pack robberies are evenly dispersed between midnight and 6:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Monday and Thursdays were the most probable days for a robbery in 2001 accounting for six incidents on each day, with Tuesdays and Sundays coming in at a close second with 4 incidents each day.

Offenders and Victims

There were 24 arrests this year for street robbery, the majority of which were males. The age of the offenders varied from 13 to 48, with an average age ranging from high-teens to early 20s. The majority of those arrested were from Boston, accounting for sixteen arrests, six of which were from Dorchester. Cambridge residents accounted for fourteen of the twenty-four arrests this year, while there were two homeless arrests. Victims were 26% female and 74% male.

Street Robbery by Neighborhood

Neighborhood	1990s Average	1999	2000	2001	Change 00–01	% of '01 Total	1990s Rank	2001 Rank
East Cambridge	21	20	12	13	+8%	9%	4	4
MIT	6	1	2	4	+100%	3%	10	11
Inman/Harrington	15	19	18	10	-44%	7%	7	7
Area 4	49	38	36	25	-31%	17%	1	2
Cambridgeport	34	24	27	28	+4%	19%	2	1
Mid-Cambridge	19	6	18	18	N.C.	12%	5	3
Riverside	16	11	21	11	-48%	7%	6	6
Agassiz	6	1	2	6	+200%	4%	11	10
Peabody	15	8	8	12	+50%	8%	8	5
West Cambridge	12	3	7	10	+43%	7%	9	8
North Cambridge	23	14	9	9	N.C.	6%	3	9
Highlands	3	1	1	0	<i>Inc.</i>	0%	13	13
Strawberry Hill	4	1	2	1	-50%	1%	12	12



Street Robbery Hotspots in 2001

1. Cambridgeport

This area saw the most activity in 2001, accounting for 23 incidents. The northern portion of this neighborhood compiles a large portion of Central Sq., which is a typically high crime area for numerous reasons. In 2001, October saw the most activity, specifically at night, but no real trends developed. Recurring afternoon and evening patterns in the fall were ended in December and will hopefully continue to be quiet on into the new year.

2. Central Square/Area 4

Numerous patterns and occurrences were noticed in Central Square and the side streets adjacent to this area in 2001, including streets such as Massachusetts Avenue, Bishop Allen Drive, Norfolk Street, Harvard Street, and Windsor Street, which were affected most. Half of the robberies occurred

over weekends, which is when most people are out on the streets, whether it be for the reason of shopping or leisure, etc. Robberies are most likely between 8:30 p.m. and 2:00 a.m.

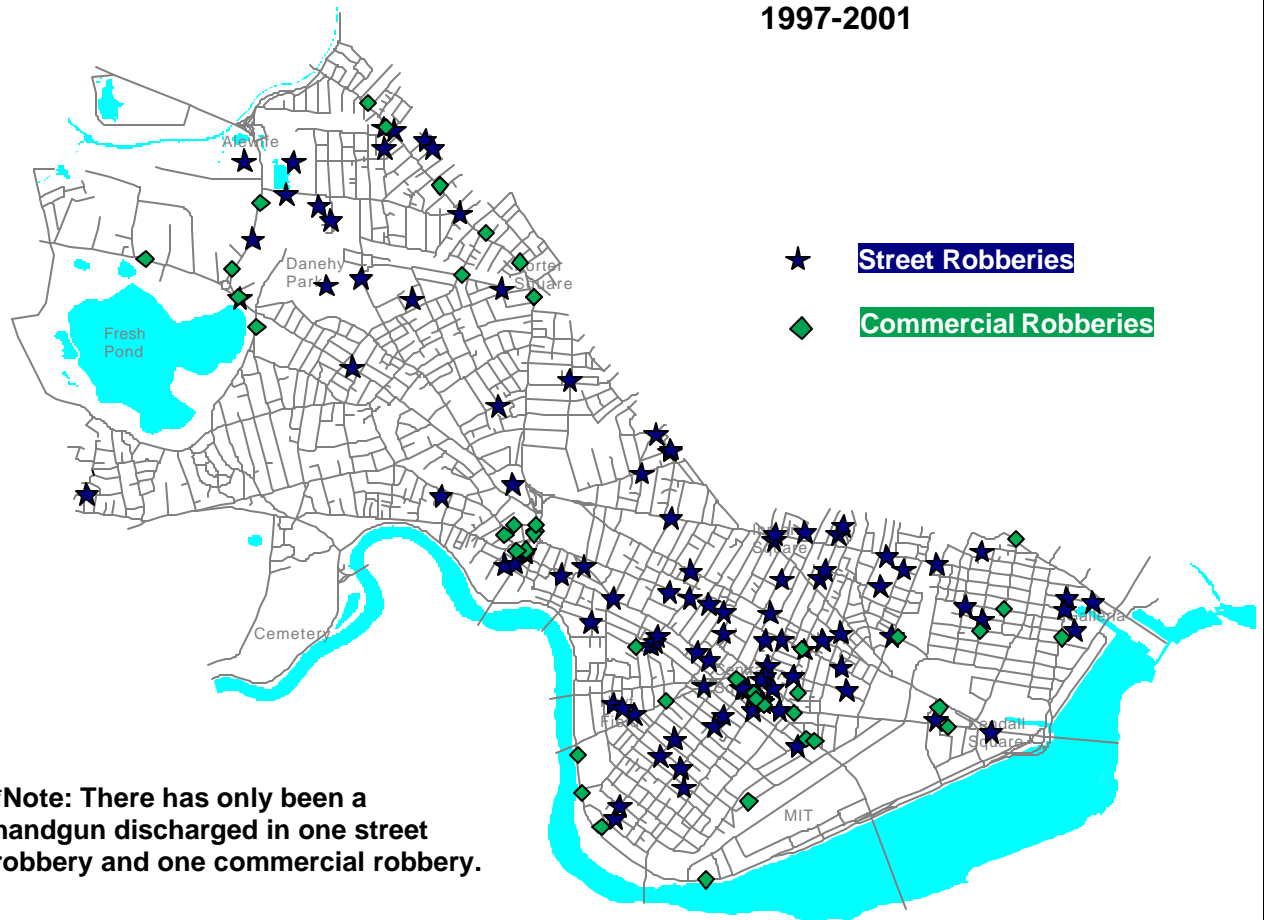
3. Mid-Cambridge

The number of incidents remained the same as in 2000, with 18 incidents, and is the third hotspot for 2001. Broadway and Cambridge St. saw the most activity, as well as their intersecting streets. No real patterns emerged.

4. Harvard Sq.

The first half of the year only experienced six street robberies in the area, which is less than the year's totals. The second half produced twelve incidents, partly due to the nicer weather and the tourists, which come to look at the colleges and are visiting for the holidays. Street robberies in this area mostly occurred in what may be considered the center of the square, the "pit." This area, named for the sunken subway entrance, has been a longstanding hotspot for numerous crime types including street robbery.

Robberies Involving Handguns 1997-2001



Street robberies involving guns tend to cluster in the Central Square neighborhoods of Area 4, Mid-Cambridge, Riverside, and Cambridgeport. Over 60% of these incidents are on weekend nights between the hours of 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. Analysis of arrested subjects for this crime type reveals an equal distribution of Cambridge residents and out-of-towners as the perpetrators. The typical scenario for this incident type involves a 20-something male walking alone late at night accosted by two suspects that brandish a gun, sometimes pistol-whip, but have only fired a weapon once in the past five years.